

[Mrs. Fannie Bray]

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Wood, Ruth

Athens Texas

Henderson County.

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Page 1. FOLKLORE AND FOLK CUSTOMS

REFERENCE: Mrs. Fannie Bray, Kemp Texas, Rt. # 5.

Old Aunt Fannie Bray, commonly called "Granny", who lives two miles west of the Aley store and is about 90 years of age, tells ["Fortune"?] fortunes by having the person whose future she is going to read, pour coffee into a cup and drain off the liquid, leaving the settlings in the bottom of the cup, then [turn?] [turning?] the cup over the head while he makes a wish.

Several years ago a life long citizen of the county, Mr. Sereno Greenhaw lost a team of mules. He rode for days looking for them with no success. He felt sure the mules had been stolen or he could at least hear of them. After he had given up all hopes of ever finding

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them, someone advised him to go to Granny Bray. After thinking it over he decided it would do no harm even though it did no good.

She told him the mules had been a long way from home, but at the present time they were standing under a large oak tree in a cemetery 3 miles north of his home, but by the time he could ride up there they would be grazing on the north side of the graveyard. She said they were all right and had not been stolen; that he had been close to them several times in the last few days, but failed to see them. When he arrived he could hardly believe his own eyes, for there they were, safe and sound, grazing on the north side of the cemetery, and their tracks under the oak tree were evidence they had been there not long before. 2 The next winter Bob Prigmore who also lived in the same community lost a team of mules, he had turned them out yoked together which was, he learned later poor [judgement?]. He had searched the country over for them. One morning he rode up to Mr. Greenshaws gate and [inquired?] if he had seen his mules, to which the reply was he had not. Mr. Greenshaw advised him to go and ask Mrs. Bray. Mr. Prigmore laughed and said he did not believe in fortune telling. Mr. Greenshaw told him how he had found his mules just as she said he would. Mr. Prigmore [decided to go but had?] little faith. When he told Granny what he had come for she [put?] the coffee pot on the fire, got her glasses, and was ready for him.

By the time he had his wish made, of course wishing to find his mules, she said, "Ah, my boy, you have waited too late to come to Granny, for your mules are all ready dead." She gave him the direction to where they were and as she said they were in the bog with their necks broken. Because of their chained they did not have a chance to get out and save their lives.

This incident is also told in which the same Granny plays an important part. Twenty-five years ago, Anthony Powell and wife had a little boy about two years of age who wandered off from the camp ground of the family and some neighbors who had gone fishing. The child was lost three days and nights. The telephone switch boards were thrown open; free

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transportation was available; everything was done in order that everybody could hear the call for help and respond. Thousands of people joined the march they came from all the surrounding country. 3 Women cooked food out of doors by the wash tubs full and carried it to the bottom to feed tired and hungry men who had been going until they were completely exhausted. Every one was at the highest pitch of excitement possible. Old Aunt Fannie was not able to cook [ormarch?], but she studied her cup and sent warnings to the people that they were going the wrong direction. They would not heed the warning until the third day when they were about ready to give up. After pleading for a [squad?] of men to go north west, she finally succeeded in persuading some of them to take her advice. Although she said they had waited too long as the child was all ready dead, and it would not be many hours until the buzzards would find it. True to her prediction, the child was found that afternoon lying dead behind a large log. dead Its position and location was were just as she said it would be. This story is still talked about at the fire sides and is told as a warning to children not to leave the camp grounds while the parents are too busy to watch them. This is a true story since the writer happened to be one of the Women who helped do the cooking for the group of men who were doing the hunting and she was present when Aunt Fanny sent them to where the child was found dead.

Old Aunt Fanny is still able to tell "fortunes", even though she is 90 years old. She is visited quite often by the young people who want to find out something about their love affairs. She does not charge anything for her services and she says she enjoys reading these youngsters "futures". #